

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 07970 01 OF 04 021109Z
ACTION STR-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 IO-14 ISO-00 STRE-00 AGRE-00 CEA-01
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AID-05 SS-15 ITC-01 TRSE-00 ICA-20 SP-02 SOE-02
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R 021040Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7632
INFO USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 TOKYO 07970

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD, JA, US
SUBJECT: STRAUSS-USHIBA FOLLOW-UP: SUMMARY STATUS REPORT

REF: TOKYO 5045

1. SUMMARY: PROGRESS ON CARRYING OUT PROCEDURAL AND REGULATORY PROVISIONS OF THE STRAUSS-USHIBA STATEMENT CONTINUED DURING THE MONTH. THERE ARE SOME EARLY SIGNS OF INCREASING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND IMPORTS, BUT IT IS STILL TOO SOON TO EXPECT SPECIFIC POSITIVE RESULTS. END SUMMARY.

2. THIS REPORT COVERS 14 UNDERTAKINGS BY JAPAN IN THE STRAUSS-USHIBA STATEMENT ON WHICH PROGRESS IS PENDING, AND EIGHT ITEMS LISTED SEPARATELY ON WHICH ACTION IS COMPLETE. THE LATTER WILL NORMALLY BE OMITTED FROM FUTURE REPORTING IN THIS SERIES.

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PAGE 02 TOKYO 07970 01 OF 04 021109Z

3. INCREASED ECONOMIC GROWTH - JAPAN WILL ACHIEVE A HIGH, NON-INFLATIONARY RATE OF GROWTH AND REITERATES ITS 7 PERCENT GROWTH TARGET FOR JFY 1978: REFATIONARY BUDGET AND DISCOUNT RATE CUTS HAVE BEEN PUT IN PLACE TO ACHIEVE THE 7 PERCENT TARGET. THE PRIME MINISTER REITERATED HIS COMMITMENT TO TARGET

ON APRIL 27 AND SAID IF NECESSARY SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET WILL BE ADOPTED. RECENT TRENDS ARE FAVORABLE. THRU MARCH THERE WERE FIVE CONSECUTIVE MONTHS OF EXPANDING INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION (13.2 PERCENT ANNUAL RATE) AND

DIMINISHING INVENTORIES. OFFICIALS ARE NOW MORE CONFIDENT TARGET CAN BE MET ALTHOUGH PRIVATE SECTOR ANALYSTS ARE STILL SKEPTICAL. INFLATION APPEARS TO BE STABILIZING IN THE 4-5 PERCENT RANGE.

4. JAPAN'S CURRENT ACCOUNT SURPLUS WILL BE CONSIDERABLY REDUCED IN JFY 1978, AND THEREAFTER FURTHER EFFORTS TO REDUCE IT WILL BE CONTINUED, AIMING AT EQUILIBRIUM: FIGURES FOR THE JAN-MAR QUARTER (LAST QUARTER OF JFY 1977) SHOWED THE CURRENT ACCOUNT SURPLUS SWELLING TO \$5.5 BIL, PROBABLY DUE AT LEAST IN PART TO SPECIAL FACTORS. FULL JFY-77 FIGURES YIELDED A \$14 BIL SURPLUS VS. GOVT PROJECTION OF \$10 BIL. NO EVIDENCE YET OF ANY DIMINUTION BUT POLICIES AND ECONOMIC TRENDS ARE CONSISTENT WITH AN IMPROVING TREND THRU JFY 1978. RECENT STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO EXPAND AND ACCELERATE "EMERGENCY" IMPORTS (TOKYO 07098) AND TO RESTRAIN EXPORTS THROUGH ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDANCE (STATE 101253). GOJ OFFICIALS HINT, WITHOUT EXPLICITLY ACKNOWLEDGING, THAT THEIR OFFICIAL FORECAST OF A \$6 BIL CURRENT ACCOUNT SURPLUS FOR JFY 1978 HAS SLIPPED OUT OF REACH FOR THIS YEAR. THE FORMULATION USED

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PAGE 03 TOKYO 07970 01 OF 04 021109Z

IN THE JAPAN/EC COMMUNIQUE IS THAT THE CURRENT ACCOUNT SURPLUS IN JFY-78 WILL BE REDUCED BY ABOUT ONE-THIRD, ALTHOUGH THIS LEAVES UNCLEAR WHETHER THE BASE FIGURE IS MEANT TO BE THE \$10 BIL FORECAST STILL OPERATIVE AT THE TIME OF THE COMMUNIQUE OR THE ACTUAL JFY-77 OUTTURN OF \$14 BIL. KEY MINISTERS ARE NOW TALKING ABOUT A DECLINE IN THE SURPLUS BECOMING EVIDENT AFTER SEPTEMBER.

5. TRADE OBJECTIVES -

(A) BASIC EQUITY IN THE U.S.-JAPAN TRADING RELATIONSHIP, (B) SECO, (C) PARITY IN OPENNESS OF BOTH U.S. AND JAPANESE MARKETS, AND (D) COMPARABLE AVERAGE LEVELS OF BOUND TARIFFS:

THE MOST CURRENT ASSESSMENTS ON THESE MTN TOPICS WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM WASHINGTON AND GENEVA.

6. MEASURES TO INCREASE JAPANESE IMPORTS OF MANUFACTURES IN TERMS OF TOTAL VALUE AND SHARE OF TOTAL IMPORTS: IT IS STILL MUCH TOO EARLY FOR ANY EVIDENCE OF THIS TO APPEAR IN THE TRADE STATISTICS. INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS MADE UP 20.7 PERCENT OF JAPANESE IMPORTS IN CY 77, THE SAME AS IN CY 76. ABOUT 39 PERCENT OF THE PURCHASES OF THE IMPORT

PROMOTION MISSION WERE OF MANUFACTURED IMPORTS, ALMOST

TWICE THE RATIO OF MANUFACTURES IN JAPANESE IMPORTS
OVERALL. JAPANESE AIR CARRIERS PLAN TO PURCHASE LARGE
COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT SOON. ADVANCE TARIFF CUTS, NOTED
ABOVE, WILL TEND TO ENCOURAGE ADDITIONAL IMPORTS OF
MANUFACTURES. PERMANENT IMPROVEMENT IN THE STRUCTURE
OF IMPORTS WILL TAKE TIME.

7. INCREASE IMPORTS OF HIGH QUALITY BEEF BY 10,000 MT

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 07970 02 OF 04 021117Z

ACTION STR-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 IO-14 ISO-00 STRE-00 AGRE-00 CEA-01

CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 FRB-01 H-02 INR-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7633

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 04 TOKYO 07970

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IN JFY 1978:

DURING JANUARY-MARCH JAPAN'S IMPORTS OF CHILLED AND FROZEN
BEEF WERE 28,131 MT, UP 28.6 PERCENT FROM THE SAME PERIOD
IN 1977. IMPORTS FROM THE U.S. WERE 2,973 TONS, UP 66.9
PERCENT. ALTHOUGH MANY FACTORS COULD HAVE CONTRIBUTED
TO THE INCREASE, THE HIGHER IMPORT LEVELS FOR U.S. BEEF
AND ALL BEEF ARE AT LEAST PARTIALLY A RESULT OF HIGHER
GENERAL AND HOTEL QUOTAS AGREED UPON IN STRAUSS-USHIBA
TALKS. FIVE OFFICIALS FROM MAF AND LIPC DEPARTED TOKYO
APRIL 22 FOR BEEF MISSION TALKS IN WASHINGTON WEEK OF
APRIL 24. IN THE MEANTIME, A GROUP OF ECONOMISTS IN
TOKYO CALLED THE FORUM FOR POLICY INNOVATION HAS RECOMMEND-
ED LIBERALIZATION OF BEEF IMPORTS AND A DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS
SYSTEM TO PROTECT PRODUCER INCOME. MAF HAS RESPONDED

THAT THE SYSTEM RECOMMENDED IS TOO EXPENSIVE AND TOO
DIFFICULT TO ADMINISTER. HOWEVER, AT LEAST ONE INFLUENTIAL
LDP DIETMAN IS RESEARCHING DEFICIENCY PAYMENTS SYSTEMS AND
IS CONSIDERING INTRODUCING LEGISLATION AS SOON AS HIS
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PAGE 02 TOKYO 07970 02 OF 04 021117Z

RESEARCH IS COMPLETE.

8. INCREASE IMPORTS OF ORANGES FROM 15,000 TO 45,000 MT:
ON APRIL 26, GOJ ANNOUNCED A 12,000 MT GENERAL QUOTA FOR
THE FIRST HALF OF JFY 1978 (APRIL-SEPTEMBER) AND A 22,500
MT SEASONAL QUOTA (JUNE 1-AUGUST 31). SINCE TOTAL STRAUSS-
USHIBA COMMITMENT WAS TRIPLING OF ORANGE IMPORTS TO 45,000
MT, THIS LEAVES 10,500 MT TO BE ALLOCATED. THIS BALANCE
IS EXPECTED TO BE ANNOUNCED UNDER THE GENERAL QUOTA FOR
SECOND HALF OF JFY 1978 (OCTOBER 1978 - MARCH 1979).

9. INCREASE IMPORT QUOTA FOR CITRUS JUICE TO 4,000 MT:
GOJ HAS INDICATED THAT THE 4,000 MT CITRUS JUICE QUOTA
FOR JFY 78 WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN DECEMBER OF 1978. THIS
IS EXPECTED TO CONSIST OF 3,000 MT OF ORANGE AND 1,000 MT
OF GRAPEFRUIT JUICE CONCENTRATE.

DURING THE INTER-INDUSTRY CITRUS MEETING (APRIL 3-6 --
SEE TOKYO 05941), PART OF U.S. INDUSTRY EXPRESSED A
DESIRE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE JUICE QUOTA IN APRIL 1978.
ANOTHER PART INDICATED DECEMBER ANNOUNCEMENT IS A SIGNI-
FICANT IMPROVEMENT OVER TIMING IN PREVIOUS YEARS BUT
THAT AN OCTOBER-NOVEMBER ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD BE PREFERABLE.

10. ESTABLISH AN INTER-INDUSTRY CITRUS GROUP TO REPORT
TO BOTH GOVERNMENTS BY NOVEMBER 1, 1978:
AFTER SMOOTH CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST MEETING OF SUBJECT
GROUP (SEE TOKYO 05941), THE JAPANESE DELEGATION HAS
SUGGESTED THAT IT VISIT THE UNITED STATES BEGINNING FIRST
WEEK OF JUNE. JAPANESE DELEGATION IS NOW STUDYING U.S.
RESPONSE (SEE STATE 101031) WHICH SUGGESTED A LONGER VISIT
THAN JAPANESE HAD ORIGINALLY PLANNED.

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PAGE 03 TOKYO 07970 02 OF 04 021117Z

11. DISPATCH A FOREST PRODUCTS GROUP THE THE U.S. NORTH-
WEST TO EXPAND AND UPGRADE THIS TRADE:
JAPANESE HAVE HELD INTERAGENCY MEETINGS TO DISCUSS MISSION
TO BE SENT TO U.S. PACIFIC NORTHWEST IN LATE MAY OR EARLY
JUNE. GOJ CURRENTLY VISUALIZES MISSION SIMILAR TO U.S.

WOOD PRODUCTS MISSION WHICH VISITED JAPAN, MARCH 6 AND 7. THE EMBASSY FORWARDED THESE VIEWS TO WASHINGTON, AND SUGGESTED A LARGER MISSION WHICH WOULD ALSO INCLUDE BUYERS AND BUILDERS.

12. DISPATCH MISSION TO U.S. TO EXPLORE PURCHASES OF ELECTRIC POWER PLANT EQUIPMENT:
AS EXPECTED, THIS SUB-UNIT OF THE LARGE IMPORT PROMOTION MISSION REVIEWED TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENTS BUT DID NOT MAKE DIRECT PURCHASES.

WE UNDERSTAND FROM A GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY SOURCE THAT JAPANESE UTILITIES MAY SOON CONTRACT FOR NUCLEAR POWER PLANT COMPONENTS COSTING PERHAPS \$200 MILLION.

13. JAPANESE CABINET DECISION TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FOREIGN SUPPLIERS UNDER GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT: THIS CABINET DECISION, ISSUED JANUARY 13, IS NOW BEING FOLLOWED UP AND A MAJOR SHIFT ON GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT POLICY IS BEING CONSIDERED. THE MAJOR IMPETUS FOR JAPANESE ACTION IS THE PRESSURE BEING PUT ON THEM IN THE MTN EITHER TO SUBSCRIBE TO A MEANINGFUL GATT GOVT PROCUREMENT CODE, OR OPT OUT. (TOKYO 6751)

14. SIMPLIFICATION OF JAPANESE IMPORT INSPECTION REQUIREMENTS:
1) MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT HAS SIMPLIFIED TESTING REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPORTED INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINES FOR MARINE USE.
2) MITI HAS PROPOSED MAKING MINUTES OF ELECTRICAL PRODUCT TESTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS AVAILABLE
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 04 TOKYO 07970 02 OF 04 021117Z

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 07970 03 OF 04 021220Z
ACTION STR-07

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CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 FRB-01 H-02 INR-10
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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7634

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 04 TOKYO 07970

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TO IMPORTERS SO AS TO REMOVE ANY COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES
DOMESTIC PRODUCERS OBTAINED THROUGH THEIR MEMBERSHIP
ON THESE COMMITTEES.

3) PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INDUSTRIAL FLASHLIGHT
TESTING HAVE BEEN IMPROVED (SEE TOKYO 6432).

THESE ARE ALL MINOR RELAXATIONS OF IMPORT INSPECTION
TESTING PROCEDURES WHICH IN TOTAL DO ACT AS A SERIOUS
IMPEDIMENT TO RAPID ENTRY OF MANY U.S. PRODUCTS INTO
JAPAN MARKET. FURTHER PROGRESS IS EXPECTED.

15. GOJ WILL PURSUE A POLICY OF AID UNTYING;
JAPANESE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROGRAM OF APRIL 21 ALSO
INCLUDED GENERAL REFERENCE TO UNTYING AS BASIC PRINCIPLE
IN DISBURSING AID AND GAVE SPECIFIC STRESS ON EXPANDING
UNTIED AID TO POOREST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. THE JAPANESE
EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON HAS CONFIRMED THE INTENTION OF
GENERAL UNTYING (STATE 016845). WE WILL BE REPORTING NEW
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PAGE 02 TOKYO 07970 03 OF 04 021220Z

LOANS AS THEY ARE APPROVED, AND WILL INDICATE WHICH ARE
UNTIED.

16. REVIEW PROCEDURES; INCREASED SUPPORT FOR THE TFC, AND
FUTURE MEETINGS AT VARIOUS LEVELS TO DISCUSS PROGRESS:
THE PACE OF TFC ACTIVITY HAS INCREASED, WITH MIXED
RESULTS SO FAR. THE TRADE STUDY GROUP (TSG) UNDER THE
TFC IS NOW CONDUCTING STUDIES ON CONSTRUCTION MACHINERY,
AUTOS, CHEMICALS, AND ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES. ON THE JAPAN-
ESE SIDE, THERE IS RESISTANCE BY OTHER MINISTRIES TO
COOPERATING WITH MITI IN RESOLVING TFC COMPLAINTS THAT
CUT ACROSS MINISTERIAL-LINES OF RESPONSIBILITY. TSG
COMPLAINTS OF THIS TYPE ARE BEING PRESENTED TO THE MINIS-
TRIES CONCERNED (TOKYO 6325). FUTURE MEETINGS AFTER THE
FUKUDA VISIT AND THE BONN SUMMIT INCLUDE A SUB-CABINET
MEETING WHICH THE JAPANESE SEEM TO BE EXPECTING IN

SEPTEMBER.

17. ACTION ON THE EIGHT FOLLOWING UNDERTAKINGS IS COMPLETE.

18. ADVANCE TARIFF CUTS EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 1978:
ALL OF THE PROPOSED ADVANCE TARIFF CUTS WERE PUT INTO EFFECT ON MARCH 4, WELL AHEAD OF SCHEDULE.

19. REMOVAL OF QUOTA CONTROLS ON TWELVE PRODUCTS:
QUOTAS ON SMOKED HERRING, CUTTLE FISH, CANNED HAMS AND BACON WHICH DO NOT REQUIRE REFRIGERATION, CERTAIN SUGARS INCLUDING MALT SUGAR, MAPLE SYRUP, CERTAIN FRUIT PULPS, LIME JUICE, CERTAIN MIXED SEASONINGS, EDIBLE SEAWEEDES, CERTAIN COAL, AND STRONTIANITE WERE LIBERALIZED EFFECTIVE APRIL 1.

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PAGE 03 TOKYO 07970 03 OF 04 021220Z

20. REVIEW FOREIGN EXCHANGE CONTROL SYSTEM, AND ANNOUNCE IMMEDIATE LIBERALIZATION MEASURES SOON:
A TWELVE-POINT PROGRAM TO EASE FOREIGN EXCHANGE CONTROL SYSTEM WENT INTO EFFECT APRIL 1 (TOKYO 05526, 01444).
WORK BY CONCERNED MINISTRIES ON MAJOR REVISION OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE CONTROL SYSTEM HAS BEEN ACCELERATED WITH A VIEW TO OBTAINING REQUIRED LEGISLATION FROM NEXT REGULAR DIET SESSION (IN FIRST HALF OF 1979).

21. DISPATCH OF A JAPANESE BUYING MISSION TO THE U.S.:
THIS MISSION HAS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED ITS VISIT, WITH REPORTED PURCHASES OR PROSPECTIVE PURCHASES OF \$1.94 BILLION. WE WILL NOT SUBMIT FURTHER REPORTS EXCEPT AS NEW DETAILS ABOUT THESE PURCHASES ARE LEARNED. MITSUKO-SHI (DEPARTMENT STORES) HAS ALREADY SENT SOME OF ITS MISSION MEMBERS BACK TO THE U.S. IN A SEPARATE FOREIGN BUYER GROUP FOR FOLLOW-UP CONTACTS.

22. EXPANSION OF JAPANESE IMPORT CREDITS:
FINANCING FOR EMERGENCY IMPORTS WAS EXPANDED AND LIBERALIZED APRIL 21. FOREIGN CURRENCY LOANS FOR UP TO TEN YEARS AT 6 PERCENT WILL NOW BE MADE AVAILABLE. NO LIMITS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN PLACED ON THE AMOUNT OF FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR THIS PROGRAM. (TOKYO 07511.) BANK OF JAPAN HAS ANNOUNCED THAT, EFFECTIVE MAY 22, IT WILL LIFT QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS ON THE VOLUME OF QUALIFIED YEN IMPORT SETTLEMENT BILLS IT WILL ACCEPT AS COLLATERAL FOR LOANS AT THE OFFICIAL DISCOUNT RATE OF 3.5 PERCENT.

23. RELAXED RULES FOR THE STANDARD METHOD OF SETTLEMENT:
MOF ANNOUNCED RELAXATION OF SMS RULES EFFECTIVE MARCH 1

ALONG LINES ANTICIPATED IN STRAUSS-USHIBA STATEMENT
(TOKYO 03078). PRESENT RULES APPARENTLY DO NOT RESTRICT
TRADE. FURTHER RELAXATION MAY ACCOMPANY REVISION OF
FOREIGN EXCHANGE SYSTEM BUT IS OTHERWISE UNLIKELY.

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PAGE 04 TOKYO 07970 03 OF 04 021220Z

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 07970 04 OF 04 021216Z

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UNCLAS SECTION 04 OF 04 TOKYO 07970

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24. COOPERATION IN INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO CURB EXCES-
SIVE COMPETITION IN EXPORT CREDITS:
JAPAN HAS CONFIRMED ITS INTENT TO ADHERE TO THE NEW
ARRANGEMENT ON OFFICIALLY SUPPORTED EXPORT CREDITS.

25. DOUBLE JAPANESE OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN
FIVE YEARS:
BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROGRAM ANNOUNCED APRIL 21 INCLUDED
PROPOSALS TO STEP UP AID COMMITMENTS, TO MAKE A SPECIAL
EFFORT AT IMPLEMENTING THE WHOLE AID BUDGET FOR JFY 1978,
AND TO INCREASE CONTRIBUTIONS TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZA-
TIONS. THE PRESS REPORTS THAT IN WASHINGTON PRIME

MINISTER FUKUDA WILL ANNOUNCE THAT AID DOUBLING WILL BE
ACHIEVED IN THREE YEARS.

26. EMBASSY WILL APPRECIATE COMMENTS ON USEFULNESS OF
THIS REPORT FOR OUR FUTURE GUIDANCE. IS IT NECESSARY TO
REPEAT DESCRIPTION OF PROGRESS WE HAVE REPORTED SEPARATELY
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PAGE 02 TOKYO 07970 04 OF 04 021216Z

DURING THE MONTH? IS REPORT SUITABLE FOR HOUSE SUB-
COMMITTEE THAT WE READ IS TO MONITOR PROGRESS UNDER
STRAUSS-USHIBA STATEMENT? SHERMAN

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Message Attributes

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Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2511441
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STRAUSS-USHIBA FOLLOW-UP: SUMMARY STATUS REPORT
TAGS: ETRD, JA, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
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